

Montgomery County Commission on Health

FISCAL YEAR 2017 ANNUAL REPORT



July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

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Commission on Health FY 2017 Annual Report

Dear County Executive Leggett and County Council President Berliner:

The Commission on Health (COH) respectfully submits its Fiscal Year 2017 Annual Report. Working both with the county's leadership as well as the dedicated, professional and conscientious staff of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the COH focused in FY 2017 on key public health issues and provided recommendations to county leadership and DHHS staff for improving county resident health and well-being.

In FY 2017, the COH focused on health literacy, prevention and men's health. The COH also continued to support work by DHHS toward achieving public health accreditation. COH members in 2017 recommended potential training for county employees about health literacy issues and supported continued investment in Montgomery Cares. Additionally, COH members worked in FY 2017 to build and maintain partnerships with Montgomery Cares, the Commission on Aging, Healthy Montgomery, the Commission on People with Disabilities and other boards, commissions and organizations.

The overarching issues of health equity and social determinants of health run as a thread stitching together the COH's work with the work of the other boards and commissions. Regardless of wealth, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, age or gender, we all experience health burdens. However, some individuals and groups are affected disproportionately and repeatedly experience barriers to services and poor health outcomes. For these individuals and populations, the county's public health and safety net programs provide vital, often irreplaceable, support. At a time of ongoing budget challenges at the state and local level and the uncertainty surrounding key public health issues at the national level, the COH's members believe that the investment our county makes in public health remains both a moral and financial imperative.

During 2017, both the COH and the county suffered a great loss with the death of County Health Officer and friend Dr. Ulder Tillman. The county will continue to benefit from the organization that Dr. Tillman worked with her colleagues to build during her years of service. Her insights and enthusiasm are greatly missed.

Daniel Russ, Ph.D.

Chair, FY2017 Commission on Health

Mission and Purpose

The primary mission of the Montgomery County Commission on Health (COH) is to advise the County Executive and the County Council on public health issues, programs, services and the allocation of funds devoted to public health needs and to monitor and assess the priorities of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (MCDHHS) in its efforts to address the health needs of residents in this County. The purpose of this report is to comply with the annual requirement that the COH provide the County Executive and the County Council with an update on the activities of the COH from July 2016 through June 2017.

**CHAPTER 24-24 OF
THE MONTGOMERY
COUNTY CODE
PROVIDES
AUTHORITY FOR
THE COMMISSION
ON HEALTH. THE
COMMISSION ON
HEALTH (COH)
WAS ESTABLISHED
ON JULY 1, 1988.**

Structure

The Commission is comprised of 19 voting members with representation from consumers and providers of health services in the County. The majority of the members must be from sectors of the County's health care and public health consumer population. As dictated by County Code, the COH also has a representative from the County Medical Society. As dictated by County Code, the COH also has a representative from the County Medical Society. In FY 2017, there were 13 consumers, and 6 providers including the Medical Society representative. The *ex officio* (non-voting) members of the COH include: the County Health Officer; the Montgomery County Public Schools liaison; and the County Council liaison. The COH continues to represent a diverse cross-section of Montgomery County residents.

Membership consisted of 19 members who were racially and ethnically diverse and vary in age, gender, geography and experience in health policy, public health, and the health care system.

The COH Chair and Vice Chair are elected by COH members and serve one-year terms. During FY17 Daniel Russ was the Chair of the Commission and Mitchell Berger was the Vice Chair. The entire COH met monthly with the exceptions of August 2016 and December 2016.

Meetings

The COH meets at 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month (except in August) at 401 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, MD 20850. All meetings are open to the general public. At a minimum, every member of the Commission is expected to either serve on one workgroup and, when possible, as a liaison to other health-related County boards, commissions, committees or minority health initiatives and programs.

With its broad perspective of public health, the COH recognizes the value of collaboration and communication with other health-related boards, commissions and committees. Many commissioners have an area of specialization, interest or constituency of public health and are therefore encouraged to serve as liaisons with other relevant health-related boards, commissions and committees. Integral to this area of special interest is the constraint that all actions are in voice of the entire COH and not self-serving in any manner. Finally, members of the COH also served on committees that allowed the COH to conduct its business such as the membership, nominating and retreat planning committees. These committees require significant time and are in addition to the monthly scheduled meetings.

FY17 Membership

CONSUMER REPRESENTATIVES

Mitchell Berger, MPH, JD (Vice Chair)

Sean Bailey, MPA

Laura Boyle, MPH

Brenda Brooks, MA

Ilana Cohen, JD

Graciela Jaschek, PhD, MPH

Jessica Kronstadt, MPP

Pierre-Marie Longkeng, MHSA

Susan Milstein, PhD

Daniel Russ PhD (Chair)

Tonya Saffer, MPH

Bridget Ware, MCP

PROVIDER REPRESENTATIVES

Brandie Armijo, LPN, BSN, MSOM, LAc

Maya Das, MD, JD

Michelle Hawkins, DNP, MSN, MBA

Lenna Israbian-Jamgochian, PharmD

Alan Kaplan, MD

Fabienne Santel, MD, MPH

MEDICAL SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVE

Sheela Modin, M.D.

FY17 Membership

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Marla Caplon, RD, LD, Director, Division of Food and Nutrition Services, MCPS

Linda McMillan, Senior Legislative Analyst, Montgomery County Council

Under J. Tillman, MD, MPH, County Health Officer, Chief, Public Health Services, MCDHHS

Mark Madaleno Hodge, MS, RN, County Deputy Health Officer, MCDHHS

STAFF

Helen Lettlow, DrPH, Senior Administrator, Public Health Services, MCDHHS

Ellen Segal, Office Services Coordinator, Public Health Services, MCDHHS

Robyn Simmons, MSA, Program Manager, MCDHHS

Karen Thompkins, MPH, Program Manager, MCDHHS

Commission on Health Priorities

The Commission on Health set the following fiscal year 2017 areas of focus during the October 20, 2016 annual retreat held at Ingleside at King Farm.

- Health Literacy: Research Health Literacy body of literature to identify a focus area for recommendations on improving health literacy among Consumers, Providers, Facilities, Policymakers in the County (Also a priority in FY 2016)
- Men's Health: Preventive Health
- Obesity: General focus on reducing obesity

Commission Correspondence

The Commission on Health sent the following letters during Fiscal Year 2017:

- Letter to the County Council supporting Minority Health Initiatives, April 2017
- Letter to the County Council supporting Montgomery Cares Advisory Board's request for budget support for oral health, behavioral health and Care for Kids program, April 2017

Commission on Health Testimonies

The Commission on Health testified at the following forums:

- County Council seated as the Board of Health on October 4, 2016
- County Council HHS Committee Work Session for HHS Boards, Committees and Commissions on October 19, 2016
- County Executive's Annual Meeting with HHS Boards, Committees and Commissions March 21, 2017

Guest Speakers

The Commission on Health hosted several guest speakers during FY 2017 COH meetings. COH members obtain important information from guest speakers and these speakers also inform MDHHS staff. COH members also make comments and suggestions to guest speakers as part of the discussion.

October 20, 2016

Orientation to Smart Choice & Smart Choice Health Insurance™ by Bonnie Braun, University of Maryland School of Public Health/UMD Extension Health Literacy Initiative

Healthy Montgomery Community Health Needs Assessment by Karen Thompkins, Healthy Montgomery, Montgomery County DHHS

January 19, 2017

Overview of Infant Mortality and Disparities by Carol Jordan, Co-Chair, Fetal Infant Mortality Review Board's Community Action Team (CAT).

March 16, 2017

Physical Education and Wellness by Cara Grant, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Montgomery County Public Schools

April 20, 2017

Good Practices for Presenting Data by Chunfu Liu, Chief Epidemiologist, Montgomery County DHHS

May 18, 2017

Early Screening for Autism Spectrum Disorder in Young Children by Avner Shapiro, Commissioner, Commission on People with Disabilities

A Whirlwind Tour of AHRQ Health Literacy Resources by Cindy Brach, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

Commission on Health Liaisons

Board, Committee or Commission	Liaison
African American Health Program	Michelle Hawkins
Board of Social Services	Sean Bailey
Commission on Aging	Alan Kaplan
Commission on Children, Youth and Families	Brenda Brooks
Commission on Veterans Affairs	Brandie Armijo
Healthy Montgomery Steering Committee	Michelle Hawkins and Tonya Saffer
Mental Health Advisory Board	Jessica Kronstadt
Montgomery Cares Advisory Board	Mitchell Berger
Montgomery County Medical Society	Sheela Modin
Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Traffic Safety Advisory	Maya Das
School Health Council	Dan Russ

Commission on Health Committees

Membership Committee

Sean Bailey, Lenna Israbian-Jamgochian, Susan Milstein

Nominating Committee

Brandie Armijo, Jessica Kronstadt

Retreat Planning Committee

Mitchell Berger, Michelle Hawkins, Graciela Jaschek, Alan Kaplan, Daniel Russ

Commission on Health Workgroups

Health Literacy

Chair: Tonya Saffer Vice Chair: Michelle Hawkins

Members: Brandie Armijo, Mitchell Berger, Graciela Jaschek, Alan Kaplan, Pierre-Marie Longkemp, Rose Marie Martinez, Susan Milstein, Ulder Tillman

Men's Health

Chair: Susan Milstein Vice Chair: Fabienne Santel

Members: Brenda Brooks, Sean Bailey

Adolescent Obesity Prevention

Chair: Maya Das Vice Chair: Lenna Israbian-Jamgochian

Members: Jessica Kronstadt, Ilana Cohen, and Sheela Modin

Commission on Health Workgroup Summary Reports

Health Literacy Workgroup

The Health Literacy Workgroup has been exploring two areas of health literacy in the county. The first is to improve communication of Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services employees, who interface with consumers either in the delivery of health care services or navigation of those services. County employees in these roles should complete training to improve health literacy to enhance their communications with consumers. Second, is to provide evidenced-based curriculum to community outreach partners that help consumers enroll in health insurance encourage. The workgroup has recommended to the Department that community outreach enroll in the University of Maryland Smart Choice Program.[®] This is an evidenced-based curriculum delivered in 2-hour community workshops that has proven to increase people's confidence in making choices about purchasing health insurance.

While the workgroup continues to explore the topic of improving health literacy in the county and form comprehensive recommendations, the Department has required that all community outreach partners complete the free, online Centers for Disease Control and Prevention program on Health Literacy for Public Health Officials.

Men's Health Workgroup

The goal of the Men's Health Workgroup is to understand, explain and address the disparities in men's health in an effort to improve the health and wellbeing of men and their families. Specifically, organize and implement a men's health project (ie. outreach effort) to address a specific men's health-related issue in Montgomery County.

This initiative came as a result of a presentation given to the Commission on Health on men's health highlighting the existing health disparities. A report entitled 'The State of Men's Health Maryland from the Men's Health Network highlights these disparities¹:

- In Maryland as of 2014, men are 33.5% more likely to die from diabetes than women
- Data found from the National Cancer Institute, State Cancer Profiles indicates that compared to the national average, males overall in Maryland are at higher risk for death from prostate cancer.
- The rate of suicide for men in Maryland is 4.6 times the rate for women

On a county level, data from Healthy Montgomery indicates that men are less likely to have health insurance and less likely to go to a physician for routine care.

Workgroup members are working with the Men's Health Network, to identify opportunities for the Commission on Health to address a men's health issue. More specifically, the workgroup will consider one of the identified disparities for implementation or provide a recommendation to the County Council.

¹Men's Health Network[™]. The State of Men's Health[™] Maryland. <http://www.menshealthnetwork.org/states/MD.pdf>. Retrieved July 14, 2017.

Commission on Health Workgroup Summary Reports

Adolescent Obesity Prevention Workgroup

The workgroup was formed in response to information shared with the COH from the Healthy Montgomery Community Dashboard that 20% of teens in the county are overweight or obese with higher prevalence found in Black (25.8%) and Hispanic/Latino (29.7%) teens. A presentation by Karen Thompkins on the Healthy Montgomery 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) at the COH retreat further noted that 1 out of 6 high school students had no physical activity (<60 minutes of physical activity on any day) in the last week. This prompted the workgroup to explore county efforts to understand adolescent obesity and to promote wellness in children and teens.

Members of the workgroup engaged the following individuals to further understand adolescent obesity prevention efforts in the county:

1. Cara Grant, Supervisor, Health and Physical Education, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) – As an invited speaker, Ms. Grant gave an overview of the physical education and health curriculum in MCPS and efforts to promote wellness. She also provided information regarding after-school programs (extramural and intramural) available to students, including the use of stipends and scholarships to support students who would be otherwise financially unable to participate. Grant money is also used to assess needs and to develop programs. MCPS also intends to hire a Wellness Coordinator next year.
2. Marla Caplon, Director of Food and Nutrition Services, MCPS provided information on meal programs available to MCPS students. The same menu is utilized system-wide for all schools and food is made available that meets different dietary needs, including meatless and gluten-free options, as well as reflects the diversity of the county. Children who received subsidized meals were required to have one fruit or vegetable item. She noted that food options selected for the menu need to meet health guidelines, but also be accepted by students.
3. Chunfu Liu, Chief Epidemiologist, Public Health Services, DHHS, responded to questions regarding data collection to assess obesity in the county. He noted that the primary source of data in Montgomery County for adolescent obesity continues to be the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). Based on census tract data from the YRBS, the geographic pattern for high school students that are overweight or obese show higher prevalence primarily in the eastern and some in the central parts of the county. Recently, an effort to collect body mass index (BMI) data on all elementary school student has been initiated.

The workgroup acknowledges the presence of multiple efforts, including by MCPS, DHHS, and others, to promote adolescent obesity prevention and wellness strategies. Although the workgroup did not make any formal recommendations, it suggested that the COH continue to:

- Support the work and collaboration of MCPS, DHHS, and other organizations in the community to prevent adolescent obesity and to promote lifelong wellness, and
- Encourage efforts to collect reliable, consistent, and longitudinal data, such as BMI, to evaluate existing programs.

Montgomery County Commission on Health

Commission on Health
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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

HTTP://
WWW.MONTGOMERYCOUNTY
MD.GOV/HHS-PROGRAM/
PHS/COMMONHEALTH/
COHINDEX.HTML



Commission on Health



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Uma S. Ahluwalia
Director

The Commission on
Health was established on
July 1, 1988.
See Chapter 24-23 of the
Montgomery County Code
for a description of the
mission of the
Commission on Health.

The County Executive and
County Council encourage peo-
ple who live or work in Mont-
gomery County to become ac-
tively involved in matters af-
fecting the quality of life in
Montgomery County. Appoint-
ments are made to over 75
Boards, Committees, and Com-
missions by the County Execu-
tive, with confirmation by the
County Council.

[http://
www.montgomerycountymd.go
v/boards/index.html](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/boards/index.html)